

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION
SERIAL NO.: 09/896,548
APPLICANT: van den NIEUWELAAR

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method for processing [a] slaughter products comprising:
providing at least one processing station for performing at least one processing on the slaughter products, wherein at least one parameter of the processing is adjustable;
recording property data relating to at least one property of each of the slaughter products;
recording relationship data relating to at least one relationship between parameter data relating to the at least one parameter of the processing and the property data;
recording demand data relating to at least one desired property of the slaughter products; [and]
recording processing data about the processing of each of the slaughter products;
and
controlling the processing of [the] a current slaughter product by adjusting the at least one parameter of the processing on the basis of [at least part of] information comprising:
 - i) the property data of at least the current product,
 - ii) the relationship data, [and]
 - iii) the demand data, and
 - iv) the processing data of other slaughter products.
2. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
recording data that indicates the availability of the at least one processing station.
3. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
recording data that indicates the availability of the slaughter product.
4. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

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recording data that indicates the availability of at least one staff member at the at least one processing station.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

controlling the processing of the slaughter product by selecting a routing for the processing of the slaughter product on the basis of at least part of the property data, the relationship data, and the demand data.

6. (currently amended) A device for processing slaughter products comprising:

at least one processing station for performing at least one processing on [a] the slaughter products, wherein at least one parameter of the processing is adjustable;

slaughter product property recording means for recording property data relating to at least one property of each of the slaughter products;

relationship recording means for recording relationship data relating to at least one relationship between parameter data relating to the at least one parameter of the processing and the property data;

demand recording means for recording demand data relating to at least one desired property of the slaughter products; [and]

processing recording means for recording processing data about the processing of each of the slaughter products; and

processing parameter adjustment means for controlling the processing of [the] a current slaughter product by adjusting the at least one parameter of the processing on the basis of [at least part of] information comprising:

i) the property data of at least the current product,

ii) the relationship data, [and]

iii) the demand data, and

iv) the processing data of other slaughter products.

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7. (original) The device of claim 6, further comprising:
processing station availability recording means for recording data that indicates the availability of the at least one processing station.
8. (original) The device of claim 6, further comprising:
slaughter product availability recording means for recording data that indicates the availability of the slaughter product.
9. (original) The device of claim 6, further comprising:
staff recording means for recording data that indicates the availability of at least one staff member at the at least one processing station.
10. (original) The device of claim 6, further comprising:
routing selection means for controlling the processing of the slaughter product by selecting a routing for processing the slaughter product on the basis of at least part of the property data, the relationship data, and the demand data.
11. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the slaughter product property recording means comprise:
a data input means for inputting data relating to the slaughter product; and
a data-processing system connected to the data input means.
12. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the slaughter product property recording means comprises:
first weighing means for weighing the slaughter product prior to a processing;

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second weighing means for weighing the slaughter product after the processing;
and
a data-processing system for recording weight data determined by the first and second weighing means.

13. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a stunning station comprising:

a stunning device for stunning the slaughter product, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to adjust a parameter of a stunning process carried out by the stunning device; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

14. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is an exsanguination station comprising:

at least one blood vessel opening device comprising a working area for opening at least one blood vessel of the slaughter product, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to move the slaughter product into and out of the working area of the blood vessel opening device; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

15. (original) The device of claim 14, further comprising a stunning station for the slaughter product, wherein the stunning station is located downstream of the exsanguination station.

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16. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a scalding station comprising:

a scalding device comprising at least a first and a second reservoir, wherein the first and second reservoirs contain liquid and wherein the temperature of the liquid of the first reservoir is different than the temperature of the liquid of the second reservoir, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to move the slaughter product through at least one of the first reservoir and the second reservoir; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

17. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a scalding station comprising:

a scalding device with at least one reservoir containing a scalding liquid having at least one scalding parameter, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to adjust the at least one scalding parameter; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

18. (original) The device of claim 17, wherein the at least one scalding parameter is scalding temperature.

19. (original) The device of claim 17, wherein the at least one scalding parameter is scalding time.

20. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a scalding station comprising:

a scalding device with at least one reservoir containing a scalding liquid, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to move at least a head of the slaughter product into and out of the reservoir of the scalding device; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

21. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a massage station comprising:

at least one massage device to act mechanically on the slaughter product in a working area of the massage device, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to move the slaughter product into and out of the working area of the at least one massage device; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

22. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a buffer station comprising:

conveyor means for conveying slaughter products through the buffer station;

a buffer device to buffer at least some of the slaughter products, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to selectively remove selected slaughter products from the conveyor means, buffer the selected slaughter products with the buffer device, and transfer the selected slaughter products from the buffer device to the conveyor means; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

23. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a head-pulling station comprising:

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a head-pulling device for removing a head of the slaughter product in a working area of the head-pulling device, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to move the slaughter product into and out of the working area of the head-pulling device; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

24. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a cutting station comprising:

at least one cutting unit which is adapted to make a cut in the slaughter product in a working area of the cutting unit, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to displace the at least one cutting unit to move the slaughter product into and out of the working area of the at least one cutting unit; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

25. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station comprises a processing tool engaged with a roller, wherein the roller engages a control groove in a wall and wherein the device further comprises:

drive means for displacing the wall and the roller with respect to one another, wherein the control groove is bifurcated into at least two secondary grooves and wherein the control groove at the location of the bifurcation comprises an adjustable switch mechanism with at least two positions for guiding the roller into one of the at least two secondary grooves, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to adjust the switch mechanism into one of the at least two positions; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

26. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a waste-removal station comprising:

at least one waste-removal device for removing a waste slaughter product in a working area of the waste-removal station, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to move the waste slaughter product into or out of the working area of the waste-removal device; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

27. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the at least one processing station comprises a number of processing stations each having a working area, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to selectively move the slaughter product into and out of the respective working areas of the processing stations on the basis of data recorded upstream with respect to the slaughter product; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

28. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a correction station comprising:

a correction device which is adapted to correct a processing which has previously been carried out on the slaughter product; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

29. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a cooling station comprising:

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a number of cooling devices which are adapted to cool the slaughter product;
a transfer device for transferring the slaughter product to at least one of the cooling devices, wherein the slaughter product comprises a product property and wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to transfer the slaughter product into the transfer device based on the product property; and
a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

30. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the slaughter product property recording means is adapted to connect the slaughter product to a product carrier in a predetermined manner.

31. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station comprises:
a processing device adapted to perform a processing on the slaughter product and having a working area comprising an inside and an outside, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to displace at least part of the processing device in such a manner that the slaughter product is located in at least one of the inside or the outside of the working area of the processing device; and
a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.

32. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the slaughter product property recording means is adapted to position the slaughter product in a predetermined manner.

33. (original) The device of claim 6, wherein the processing station is a heat-treatment station comprising:

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an oven with a first outlet and a second outlet, wherein the processing parameter adjustment means is adapted to discharge the slaughter product from at least one of the first outlet or the second outlet; and

a data-processing system for controlling the processing parameter adjustment means.